

EXPEDITED PROCEDURE UNDER 37 CFR § 1.116
GROUP ART UNIT 2131; EXAMINER A. Sherkat

PATENT

IBM Docket No. POU920010074US1

09/942,417

Remarks

At present, applicants' Claims 1-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 based upon the patent to Hu (U.S. Patent No. 5,586,260 of record herein). In light of the comments below, this rejection is respectfully traversed. Accordingly, claims 1-10 remain pending in the present application.

Preliminarily, it is noted that a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is a narrow ground of rejection. It requires each and every one of applicants' recited claim elements to be present and disclosed within the four corners of a single cited document.

With respect to applicants' claims and the teachings found in the patent to Hu, it is noted that there are indeed significant differences. These differences do not yet appear to be fully appreciated by the Examiner. Accordingly, applicants now wish to characterize their invention in a way which might be better understood and appreciated. Some of the differences between the cited art and applicants' claims can also be more deeply appreciated by a full and complete reading of applicants' prior response.

More to the point however, it is noted that applicants' invention provides a mechanism in which at least two types of security program modules present on different nodes can be matched up with one another. In particular, in its most typical embodiment, applicants' invention would include a plurality of security program modules present on at least two nodes or data processing units in a clustered data processing environment. Applicants provide an access program layer on these nodes so as to provide a consistent interface. In applicants' claimed method security program modules on different nodes are matched up with their corresponding counterparts on other nodes. In particular, applicants' invention provides a consistent interface in which a user or

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application program running on one node can select at the application program's option one of a number of different security program modules. The consistent interface provides a linkage between the module selected and the same module present on a node for which secure access is sought.

This aspect of applicants' claimed invention is captured in the following words from applicants' claim 1:

“said layer presenting a consistent interface, from at least two of said nodes to at least two types of security program module”. [Emphasis added herein.]

From the above language it is clear that a consistent interface is provided and also that this interface is provided to at least two types of security program module. These modules are present on other nodes. In particular, it is seen that applicants' claim 1 specifically, clearly and unambiguously refers to the presence, and in fact the desired presence, of at least two types of security program module. It is furthermore clear that applicants' method provides an interface to at least two of these security modules. Thus, it is clear that in applicants' claimed method there is present on a single node at least two types of a security program module.

Attention is next directed to the following language found in applicants' claim 1:

“Which access a same one of said at least two types of security program modules”. [Emphasis added herein.]

From this recitation in applicants' claim 1, it is seen that the interface provides a connection as it were (association or linkage are comparable terms) between two of the same security program modules. Furthermore, it is clear from the recitation found in applicants' claim

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1 that these two security program modules are the same. It is critically important that the Examiner understand that it is the purpose of applicants' claimed invention to utilize identical security program modules on different data processing nodes.

In stark contrast, it is seen that the patent to Hu teaches that there is provided a bridge which is required to map parameters from one kind of security program on one node to a different kind of security program on another node. In applicants' claimed invention, there is absolutely no need whatsoever for any of this parameter matching or mapping. In applicants' claimed invention the same security program module operates at both ends of the process. There is no need for mapping, there is no need for a proxy server, there is no need for a translation of any security parameters or the like. To put it succinctly, applicants' claimed invention automatically provides, through a consistent interface, a matching of security program modules on different nodes. In contrast, the patent to Hu assumes that there is a need to map security programs running on one node to fit, via a bridge and proxy server, to a different security program on another node. Furthermore, those of ordinary skill in the art, following the teachings of Hu would be led to believe that if the same security program module were running on both nodes there would be no problem whatsoever. Accordingly, it is seen furthermore that Hu has utterly no appreciation for the problems solved by the present applicants.

Granting that both the cited patent and applicants' specification deal with security programs running on different nodes, however, the bridge approach taught by Hu is seen to be significantly inferior to the method taught by the present applicants. In particular, Hu requires that some form of parameter matching take place between distinct and disparate security program modules. In stark contrast, applicants' claimed invention eliminates the need for any and all of this parameter matching by instead matching up the security program modules themselves through a consistently provided interface. This gives application programs a much greater and

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much more flexible choice in selecting a particular security program module. Those of ordinary skill in the art following the teachings of Hu have none of this ability whatsoever.

Accordingly, it is seen from the comments presented above that the rejection of applicants' claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 can not be sustained. It is therefore respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

It is noted that this response makes no changes in applicants' specification, drawings or claims. It is also noted that the present response is being submitted within the two month time period set for in 37 C.F.R. § 1.136. It is therefore respectfully requested that the Examiner provide applicants' attorney with an Advisory Action prior to August 4, 2005 at which time applicants' attorney would be required to file a Notice of Appeal. Lastly, it is noted that the present response does not require the payment of any fees.

Accordingly, it is now seen that all of the applicants' claims are in condition for allowance. Therefore, early notification of the allowability of applicants' claims is earnestly solicited. Furthermore, if there are any matters which the Examiner feels could be expeditiously considered and which would forward the prosecution of the instant application, applicants' attorney wishes to indicate his willingness to engage in any telephonic communication in furtherance of this objective. Accordingly, applicants' attorney may be reached for this purpose at the numbers provided below.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

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